

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Children and Families

This bill revises the term "service dog" to include a psychiatric service dog or mental health service dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks that mitigate or assist with the difficulties of its owner with a psychiatric disability, medical condition, or developmental disability recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Tasks include alerting or responding to episodes such as panic attacks and anxiety, and performing other tasks directly related to the owner's specific psychiatric disability, medical condition, or development disability. Psychiatric disability, medical condition, or development disability includes autism, epilepsy, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorder, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, and other mental illnesses.

Currently, any individual who knowingly or intentionally fails to maintain control of his or her animal to prevent the animal from chasing or harassing a service dog while the dog is functioning as a service dog and temporarily interferes with the service dog's ability to carry out the dog's function is guilty of a class B misdemeanor. The bill requires the owner of an animal that causes substantial physical injury or death to the service dog to be ordered to fully compensate the service dog's owner for the injury, loss, or replacement of the service dog.